

MINUTES
BROWN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Monday, February 14, 2011
Green Bay Metro Transportation Center
901 University Avenue
Green Bay, Wisconsin
9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Sunny Archambault | <u>X</u> | Barbara Natelle | <u> </u> |
| Diana Brown | <u>Exc</u> | Sandy Popp | <u>X</u> |
| Brandon Cooper | <u> </u> | Cole Runge | <u>X</u> |
| Pat Finder-Stone | <u>X</u> | Julie Tetzlaff | <u>X</u> |
| Chris Hasselbacher | <u>X</u> | Mary Van Acker | <u> </u> |
| Kathy Hillary | <u> </u> | Derek Weyer | <u>X</u> |
| Debbie Johnson | <u>X</u> | Tina Whetung | <u>X</u> |
| Kathy Johnson | <u>X</u> | John Withbroe | <u> </u> |
| Nick Mahlik * | <u>X</u> | Vacant – BC Exec. | <u> </u> |
| Byia Martin | <u> </u> | Vacant – BC Board | <u> </u> |

GUESTS: Senator Robert Cowles, Senator Dave Hansen, Representative Andre Jacque, Representative Jim Stieneke, Representative Karl Van Roy, and Representative Chad Weininger.

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa J. Conard, Katelyn Kubacki, Sal LaPuma, Steve Maricque, Steve Rosenbaum* for Nick Mahlik, and Tony Walter.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Approval of the December 6, 2010, Transportation Coordinating Committee meeting minutes.

A motion was made by K. Johnson, seconded by P. Finder-Stone, to approve the December 6, 2010, Transportation Coordinating Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion with state legislators about issues faced by providers and users of public transit and specialized transportation services.

C. Runge welcomed the state senators and representatives and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Members of the TCC introduced themselves.

K. Johnson asked if the state senators and representatives were familiar with a proposal to remove the state's transit funding from the transportation budget and move it into the general fund as a social service.

The state senators and representatives indicated that they are not aware of this proposal.

The consensus was that segregated transportation funds would remain segregated and

would not be “raided.”

Rep. Jacques stated the governor’s proposed budget would be unveiled on February 22. Officials will know more at that time.

All agreed that there is a significant budget problem at the state level.

C. Runge stated that the members of the TCC represent elderly people and people with disabilities who rely on fixed route and specialized transportation services. Green Bay Metro provides specialized transportation (the paratransit program) through a contract with Medi-Vans. Red Cross also provides specialized transportation. As the population ages and lifespans increase, the demand for specialized transportation services will increase. Funding for these services is not keeping up with the growing demand for these services.

Rep. Van Roy indicated that with the state’s \$3.6 billion structural deficit, spending in this area would likely remain status-quo at best.

All of the state senators and representatives indicated they would be happy to hear from TCC members after the budget is released to hear their specific concerns.

Sen. Hansen noted that federal transit operating assistance for Green Bay Metro and Valley Transit is in jeopardy because their respective urbanized area populations will likely exceed 200,000 after the 2010 census results are released.

C. Runge stated that each system is expected to lose between \$1,000,000 and \$2,500,000 each year, but all of the state’s Tier B transit systems will feel the impact because funding for the systems within this tier is “equalized” according to state law.

Sen. Hansen stated that the federal “100 bus” proposal (which would restore or retain federal funding for systems that operate 100 or fewer buses during peak periods) would provide relief to many systems, including Green Bay and Appleton.

K. Johnson stated that the Green Bay City Council and the Brown County Board of Supervisors passed resolutions endorsing the “100 bus” exemption.

C. Runge stated that efforts to enact the “100 bus” proposal have failed for many years even though support exists nationwide. C. Runge stated that the reauthorization of the federal transportation law could address this issue. The current transportation law (SAFETEA-LU) has expired and is currently operating on an extension.

Rep. Weininger suggested that the Green Bay Urbanized Area be split into two urbanized areas to avoid the 200,000 population designation.

C. Runge stated that splitting the urbanized area into two areas might not be the best strategy. Although the 200,000 population rule currently eliminates Metro’s ability to secure Federal Section 5307 operating assistance, the area receives other benefits from having a larger population. Therefore, any plan to split the urbanized area must be closely studied to determine if the overall impact would be positive.

K. Johnson stated that Metro staff would be meeting with Congressman Reid Ribble in April.

D. Johnson of ASPIRO indicated that the demand for specialized transportation will increase when Family Care is launched in the area.

S. Maricque of the Lakeland Chapter of the American Red Cross provided the following regarding his organization's transportation program:

- 3,700 persons with disabilities are enrolled in the program.
- 60,000 trips are provided annually.
- The program relies on approximately \$300,000 in state 85.21 monies.
- The program relies on federal Section 5310 grants to provide vehicles (80 percent federal / 20 percent local match).
- 60 percent of the rides are medical-related.
- 100 dedicated volunteer drivers are the key to the program's success.
- The demand for the service will continue to grow.
- The program allows individuals to maintain a self-sustaining lifestyle.

S. Archambault stated that Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) volunteers use their own vehicles to transport clients. The volunteers are reimbursed on a per-mile basis. Counties are responsible for setting their own reimbursement rates.

C. Runge stated that the ADRC and Brown County Planning staff collaborated on a specialized transportation study several years ago. The study found that the level of coordination between the agencies was high and that they utilize their limited resources very efficiently.

S. Archambault stated that transportation is essential in meeting the basic needs of many individuals in Brown County.

C. Runge stated that public transit and specialized transportation services are essential for providing access to jobs.

Rep. Jacque asked if Metro staff was still considering a two hub system.

K. Johnson stated that municipal funding is a potential obstacle to implementing a two hub system.

C. Runge stated that a two hub system is still being considered. Staff has recommended that a second hub be established in the Bay Park Square Mall area, and the Green Bay Transit Commission agreed with this recommendation. A second hub would allow the system to provide better service to the northwest and southwest portions of the area and to close the service gap between De Pere and Ashwaubenon.

C. Runge stated that incorporating transit into a statewide economic development initiative and making it known that many people in Wisconsin rely on public transportation to reach jobs might be an effective way to address the funding issue.

Members of the TCC thanked the state senators and representatives for making themselves available to the committee.

3. Other matters.

The next meeting of the TCC is scheduled for Monday, June 13, 2011, at 9:45 a.m.

4. Adjourn.

C. Runge closed the meeting at 9:58 a.m.